

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4519

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INFO CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 9697

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, KS

SUBJECT: ROK COVERAGE OF JUSMAG COSTS

SUMMARY: ROKS HAVE BEEN FOOT-DRAGGING ON PICKING UP JUSMAG LOCAL COSTS FOR A YEAR. WE BELIEVE HOWEVER, THAT AN INSTRUCTION FROM WASHINGTON TO PRESS ROKS AGAIN SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING THE PAST YEAR EMBASSY, UNC AND JUSMAG OFFICERS HAVE ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS TAKEN UP QUESTION OF ROK PAYMENT OF JUSMAG LOCAL COSTS, INCLUDING HIRE OF LOCAL NATIONAL EMPLOYEES, TRANSPORTATION, MAINTENANCE OF QUARTERS, PUBLIC UTILITIES, AND OTHER LOCAL JUSMAG SERVICES AND EXPENSES. WE HAVE ASKED IN OUR REPRESENTATIONS FOR \$1.1 MILLION PER YEAR BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 1976. IN SUPPORT THIS POSITION WE HAVE POINTED OUT: (A) 1950 COUNTRY TO COUNTRY AGREEMENT IN WHICH ROK AGREED TO PROVIDE THIS SUPPORT; (B) INCREASING ROK ABILITY TO PAY ITS OWN WAY; (C) DESIRABILITY SUCH A MOVE FROM GAO AND CONGRESSIONAL POINTS OF VIEW; (D) FACT THAT THESE COSTS COVERED BY OTHER SECURITY ASSISTANCE RECIPIENTS AROUND THE WORLD; AND (E) POSSIBILITY THAT ROKS WILL ACTUALLY BE ABLE TO CUT COSTS IF THEY

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NEGOTIATE LOCAL CONTRACTS INSTEAD OF JUSMAG. AS FOR OUR

OCTOBER 21, 1960 EXCHANGE OF NOTES WITH ROKS SUSPENDING THESE COST PAYMENTS INDEFINITELY WE HAVE POINTED OUT THAT AS INDICATED BY ABOVE POINTS TIMES HAVE CHANGED AND 1960 AGREEMENT NO LONGER VALID.

2. REPRESENTATIONS ON THIS ISSUE WERE MADE AS EARLY AS DECEMBER, 1974 BY CHIEF JUSMAG TO MND ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR LOGISTICS LT. GENERAL PAIK SOEK CHU AND AT MOFA BY EMBASSY, AND WERE REPEATED ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS DURING 1975. DESPITE THESE EFFORTS CHIEF JUSMAG RECEIVED NEGATIVE REPLY IN WRITING FROM LT. GENERAL PAIK ON SEPTEMBER 29, 1975 ARGUING THAT ROKG HAD ALREADY BUDGETED AS MUCH ON DEFENSE AS IT COULD AFFORD DUE LARGE DEMANDS OF FIP AND REDUCTION IN MAP. PAIK ALSO ARGUED 1976 BUDGET ALREADY MADE UP AND COULD NOT BE REVISED TO INCLUDE MAG COSTS, WE SUBSEQUENTLY POINTED OUT WE FIRST RAISED THIS YEAR AGO. CINCUNC DISCUSSED MATTER BRIEFLY IN OCTOBER WITH MND SUH AND SUH APPEARED RECEPTIVE. HOWEVER, MOST RECENTLY WHEN POLCOUNS FOLLOWED UP ON QUESTION AT BEGINNING DECEMBER WITH FURTHER REPRESENTATION TO YI SANG OCK CHIEF AMERICAN BUREAU MOFA, YI AFTER SOME DELAY MADE SAME POINTS CONTAINED LT. GEN. PAIK'S LETTER OF SEPTEMBER 29. YI ALSO REQUESTED THAT EMBASSY SEEK GUIDANCE FROM WASHINGTON BEFORE PURSUING MATTER FURTHER.

3. THIS IS NAGGING ISSUE OVER RELATIVELY SMALL AMOUNT WHICH FOR VARIETY REASONS LISTED PARA 1 CLEARLY IN ROK INTEREST AS WELL AS OUR OWN TO BEGIN TO PAY. ROK RELUCTANCE TO COVER JUSMAG COSTS HAS UNDOUBTEDLY BEEN EXACERBATED BY MAJOR NEW DEFENSE COSTS AND REQUIREMENTS THEY FACE. GOOD DEAL OF PROBLEM HOWEVER, SIMPLY DUE TO BUREAUCRATIC BUCK PASSING BETWEEN MOFA AND MND WHICH HAS COMPLICATED AND DRAGGED OUT QUESTION UNNECESSARILY. THERE IS ALSO AWARENESS AMONG ROKS THAT BY NOT PAYING THESE RELATIVELY SMALL COSTS THEY MAY HURT THEIR CASE FOR U.S. SUPPORT OF FIP. SINCE HIS RETURN FROM WASHINGTON LT. GEN. PAIK HAS INDICATED UNDERSTANDING THIS POINT. MOREOVER, AS PAIK ALSO INDICATES, WE HAVE NO DOUBT ROKS CAN FIND FUNDS TO PICK UP JUSMAG COST COVERAGE BEGINNING JAN. 1, 1976, IF THEY MAKE UP MINDS TO DO SO. WE BELIEVE THEREFORE THAT INSTRUCTION FROM WASHINGTON ALONG LINES INDICATED SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE.

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4. ACTION REQUESTED: ACCORDINGLY, REQUEST EMBASSY/JUSMAG BE INSTRUCTED TO MAKE FURTHER APPROACH AND PRESS ROKS TO BEGIN PICKING UP JUSMAG COSTS AS OF JANUARY 1, 1976.
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